

BIO-FUEL FOR THOUGHT

Renowned eco-builder and engineer Philip Dolan presented his hit show "Would you like chips with that?" at Lawson Bowling club on Wednesday 19th May. Blue Mountains Permaculture hosted the event, which was well attended.



Philip started the night by talking about some of the problems faced by our society and a few basic principles of permaculture. The main focus of the night was to talk about bio-fuels, particularly bio-diesel made from used cooking oil. Philip has been running his cars on home made bio-diesel for over 10 years, and his latest car, a 1986 Mercedes has done 410,000 trouble free kilometres. Philip explained in great detail how to effectively produce bio-diesel at home and the viability of increased use of used oils, and interestingly bio-diesel can be fully produced for around 30c per litre! Wonder if anyone has told Shell or BP that.....? Laurie

REDGUM REPRIEVE

A landmark decision will preserve 100,000 hectares of ancient trees some more than 300 years old. It will create two wetlands of international significance



at Millewa and Werai, on the River Murray and ecosystems which are habitat to over 50 species of threatened animals and a breeding site for migratory birds. The announcement, made by Premier Kristina Keneally and the Minister for Environment, Frank Sartor, marks the largest protection of land for conservation in NSW since 2005. An assistance package totalling \$100 million has been promised to the local logging industry.

"We are protecting in ancient & internationally significant forest – the River Red Gum forest in the Riverina," Ms Keneally said. "As well as providing long term protection for the river red gums, the new parks will continue providing local residents and tourists with access to this special environment ... and ensure that land set aside as Indigenous Protected Areas will not be logged." Mark

FEED IN TARIFFS NEEDED

BM Conservation Society was lucky enough to have Dr Mark Diesendorf give a talk at our last monthly meeting. He explained how Australia could replace nearly all its dirty coal-fired power stations by 2030. In Australia, wind power can replace some baseload coal, provided some additional intermittent peakload capacity is provided to cope with "fluctuations". Baseload supply can be provided by a mix of wind, bioelectricity from combustion of residues such as sugar cane as seen in QLD, solar thermal power with low-cost thermal



storage and soon hot rock geothermal power. Natural gas too, provided it hasn't all been sold to China, could be fuelling cogeneration of electricity and heat, trigeneration (electricity, heating and cooling), combined-cycle

power stations and back-up for solar hot water, solar thermal electricity and wind power. There is an embarrassment of riches in the non-nuclear alternatives to coal. The cost of new nuclear power has increased rapidly in the last 10 years so that now it is more expensive than wind and about the same as solar voltaics. Dr Diesendorf said "What we need is effective policies... and a ban on new conventional coal power, gross feed-in tariffs for renewable energy and an upgraded transmission infrastructure, and in the long term an effective carbon trading scheme". Laurie.

YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Youth Parliament is a State wide program run for 15-18 yr olds. Representatives for each electorate are chosen to join, and are placed into a group

based on issues that concern them. These groups include Climate Change & Environment, Women's Affairs, Education, Transport, Juvenile Justice, and so on. Each team of about 10 people are to design a bill on an issue within their topic that is to be



presented and debated in State Parliament. There are two camps held for the participants. The

first is a three day training camp, where you are taught how to write a bill, parliament etiquette and how to debate. The next camp is a 6 day parliament camp where each team takes their bill and debates it in parliament. Each bill is then given to the local MP's at the end of the camp, and in that past, has gone on to be raised in real NSW State Parliament. My team, Climate Change & Environment, has made a bill to make Photovoltaic Solar Panel installation a compulsory building requirement with all new buildings and extensions. The bill details the rebates and the percentages of total energy to solar panels must create for your home/business, a stepping stone for real change in the future. Kate

CLIMATE CLEVER

Many Blue Mountain schools have received grants of up to \$50 000 to install solar and other renewable power systems, solar hot water systems, rainwater tanks and a range of energy efficiency measures including: efficiency lighting, skylights, ceiling fans, insulation, sensors and shade awnings. Our school Katoomba High has installed a 5.6 kw system on the library roof (photo) and light sensors in some of the rooms. We have a smart meter so that we can monitor how much electricity we can supply to the grid and how much energy we are using at the school. The school is also part of the NSW department of education Climate Clever Energy Savers program which provides an opportunity for students to contribute to creating a more sustainable is to identify a sustainability issue in your school and to develop a creative and practical proposal for action that will save energy and reduce greenhouse gases. Through this project you will engage with issues of sustainability, learn how to

take sustainability action to make a difference and strengthen knowledge, understanding and skills related to school subjects. This is an authentic project in



which your proposal can be implemented, provided that it is well designed. Ian, Matt & Jack

BUSH BLITZ

This year is the International Year for Biodiversity and this month World Environment Day. Both are an opportunity to help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity to our lives & our future. Imagine a barnacle that looks like the Sydney Opera House and an outback ant that makes a tubular home from spinifex grass and red soil. Just some newly discovered Australian species that are part of a new **Bush Blitz** teachers' resource booklet and competition that will this week go to students around the country. Even in the Blue Mountains it is possible to find new species. Remember the Wollemi Pine? We came across this article from the newsletter of the Australian Plants Society. "We came to a shallow gully (near Newnes) containing a small forest of acacias about 15 metres tall of a new species, *Acacia mathewii*, whose description did not make the *Flora of NSW*". Environment Protection Minister Peter Garret said "We want to get kids excited by the environment around them and the discoveries still taking place today of new plants and animals across our vast continent,". A national competition during National Science Week in August offers prizes include free trips to museums and for high school students, the chance to participate in a Bush Blitz field trip, working with the country's top scientists."These kids are the ones who will find solutions to biodiversity threats & climate change." Australian Science Teachers Association CEO Peter Russo said. Kiara

STOP PRESS

Thanks to design by Mark Berry, a KHS student, and CONSOC funding, our drink tap water campaign moves from stickers to bottles, to be launched at Winter Magic

